

Medical.

Next, what about the administration of the Medical Department? Here we see favouritism ripening into nepotism. This Departmental Head seems to have wider powers of action than any of the other Heads. It is only the other day, Sir, that he usurped the powers of the Diwan by expunging certain remarks made by a Member of this House in a Visitors' Book at Kuriyarkutti Dispensary, and by issuing a general circular to his subordinates prohibiting them from showing the Visitors' Book to that Member. And why? Because the remarks of the Member did not reflect much credit on the administration of this Department. Has he (Chief Medical and Sanitary Officer) not thereby insulted this House? Yet, was there any action taken by the Diwan? Does not that insult continue to sting us still, and proclaim that official autocracy knows no personal honour? Why was no action taken by the Government for this unwarranted act of the Medical Head without Government's sanction? I pause for an answer. What would be the result, if Departmental Heads are allowed in this manner to go unchecked?

Public Works.

Our P. W. D. is not in any way more encouraging. There we find big works involving thousands of rupees being given, without tenders being called for, to persons of the Chief Engineer's choice, perhaps to consistently observe the principle of favouritism adverted to above.

This is the state in which we are now placed, and the people who have sent us as their representatives to the Council look to us for the betterment of these matters.

I close these general remarks leaving my colleagues in my Party to deal with the budget in detail, and reserving my further remarks to the time when the various items would be moved before this House.

Mr. C. Barton Wright.—Mr. President, Sir, we have met here to-day to discuss the first budget of the new Council. It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the Finance Member on his clear and careful analysis of the estimates presented to this House; but I must confess that the budget itself strikes me as unsatisfactory in several fundamental features.

In the first place, the policy of accumulating surpluses year after year, without making adequate provision for a proper system of irrigation and other development works, is bound to produce baneful consequences. At the present moment, we have a net surplus of Rs. 68,05,438 which may amount up to Rs. 80 lakhs at the end of 1934.